



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/677,699	10/02/2003	Mikio Onodera	9281-4662	9773
7590	02/10/2005		EXAMINER	
Brinks Hofer Gilson & Lione P.O. Box 10395 Chicago, IL 60610			MILLER, TAKISHA S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2855	

DATE MAILED: 02/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

AK

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/677,699	ONODERA, MIKIO	
	Examiner Takisha Miller	Art Unit 2855	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- ' Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 November 2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1 and 3-8 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-6 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1 and 3-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kataoka et al. (5,995,104)(hereinafter Kataoka) in view of McGugan (US 2002/0166267).

a. With respect to claims 1,7 and 8, Kataoka teaches an input device (1) comprising an outer casing (6) having an opening (13), an operating lever (3/11) having a fulcrum (11a) inside the outer casing (6) and being pivotably supported (Figs.1, 2), detecting means (38) for detecting an operating state of the operating lever, an actuator (37) for imparting an external force to the operating lever, control means (Col. 4, lines 12-32) for controlling driving of the actuator (37) based on output signals supplied from the detecting means (38) and a monitor (2) for displaying various menus (30/A-F)(Col.5, lines 15-23) and a current position of the operating lever, wherein the outer casing (6) is provided with a plurality of key switches (10) arranged thereon so as to surround the operating lever (11)(Fig. 3)(Col. 5, lines 26-37). Kataoka lacks teaching the key switches

are subjected to a surface treatment that gives different surface touches from key to key.

McGugan teaches key switches (51,53,55) which are subjected to a surface treatment that gives different surface touches from key to key (Fig.5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Kataoka to include the above limitations taught by McGugan in order to allow the operator to confirm without needing visible confirmation that the correct button actuator is being engaged (See McGugan; ¶ 0029).

b. With respect to claims 3 and 4, Kataoka teaches a sense of force imparting type input device (1) wherein the operating forces and strokes required to operate the key switches (10) differ from each other (Col. 6, lines 4-41).

c. With respect to claims 5 and 6, Kataoka teaches a sense of force imparting type input device (1) wherein the key switches (10) are arranged into an annular shape (Fig.3) and arranged into the shape of a square frame (Fig.8).

Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Takisha Miller whose telephone number is (571) 272-2184. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (7:00 am - 3:30 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward Lefkowitz can be reached on (571) 272-2180. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



EDWARD LEFKOWITZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800